

FWI Funding Statement

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Faculty/Area: DeGroote School of Business

Project title: A Framework for Supporting Experiential Learning at McMaster University

Summary of Project Results

1. How has the project fostered collaboration and interdisciplinarity?

The project has fostered collaboration and interdisciplinarity in two ways:

- Project team: The team members came from different areas (Library, Marketing and Operations Management)
- Research activities and subjects: the research has involved different areas from the university as well as the community. As a non-exhaustive list we have involved:
 - faculty members from all departments in the faculty survey and focus group
 - community representatives in the community focus group (Innovation Factory, The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, City of Hamilton, Ontario School of Excellence).
 - University areas: MILO, FWI office, MIETL, Library, Career Services of all faculties, Experiential Education Directors.

a. Have other projects been initiated as a result of this project?

The web platform has been tested in one course at the DeGroote School of Business.

The project team is planning to publish a journal paper about the findings of the project.

b. If it was recommended in your award letter that you connect with particular individuals/groups, have you done so and what was the result?

We have worked with Gay Yuyitung at MILO and Mary Koziol from the President's Office. Gay helped us connect with the community stakeholders in some of our meetings and the community focus group. Mary helped us coordinate our efforts internally with faculty, students and offices. She has also shared resources about similar initiatives in other universities.

c. Have you worked with others who have or have not been funded through the current RFP?

We have involved Brianna Smrke and Michael Hewlett who were conducting a FWI project on the McMaster Social Innovation Lab. We have used the Experiential Education Office in the Faculty of Social Sciences to hire students through the Social Sciences Internship Program. We have also used Lime Survey from MIITL.

2. How has the project exposed students to new or emerging research?

Hooria Raza and Christian Baci, both senior undergraduate students, worked as research assistants in our project. Hooria worked on data collection and survey design and helped

with organizing the focus groups. Christian designed the web platform and courses database.

3. How has the project offered students an experience beyond traditional borders?
The project exposed Hooria to experiential learning initiatives on campus and introduced her to key faculty members engaged in experiential learning. Christian met with the IT team at the DeGroot School of Business and gained valuable experience in web design.
4. How has the project challenged the confines of existing programming and advanced new paradigms of research or education?
The project encouraged discussion on application of experiential learning (EL) in different classroom environments (e.g., incorporating EL in large classrooms, introducing EL in introductory courses, different ways to use EL).
5. How will the outcomes of the project be sustained or expanded?
The web platform was housed outside of the university to avoid administrative delays. For sustainability we suggest moving the web platform to a university server and have it maintained and supported by the university. The platform can also be piloted in other faculties.
6. Please outline any barriers or challenges that may have prevented you from achieving some of your project goals.
The project was delayed due to the time it has taken us to open an account. We also had to host the web platform on an external server to avoid the delays in obtaining administrative clearance and some limitation of web design that we would have to face if it is hosted internally.

Recommendations

1. Move the web platform to a server within the university. This can be done by the team that is currently designing the web site for the community engagement database.
2. Have a facilitator to work with all faculties and community, such as the [model used at the Wilfrid Laurier](#).
3. Develop documentation and guidelines for sharing EL opportunities between faculties and involving community in experiential learning activities.
4. Encourage Co-op interns to come up with project ideas for engaging other students in the future.